

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House
(317) 232-9855

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6693

BILL NUMBER: HB 1219

DATE PREPARED: Apr 3, 2001

BILL AMENDED: Apr 3, 2001

SUBJECT: Hunting and Fishing Licenses for Veterans with Disabilities and Licenses for Youth.

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FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 X DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) This bill entitles a military veteran who has a service-connected disability to reduced fees for hunting and fishing licenses. The bill adds fishing license to the combined youth hunting license. It also allows the Natural Resources Commission to increase certain hunting and fishing license fees.

The bill also provides that participants in the police and firefighter games are exempt from certain hunting and fishing license fees.

The bill also makes a technical correction.

Effective Date: (Amended) Upon Passage; July 1, 2001.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:(Revised) ***Increase in License Fees.*** The bill allows the Natural Resources Commission to increase certain hunting and fishing license fees. This provision will allow the Commission to increase fees over current levels which will result in an increase in revenue collected. For FY 2000, the Department collected approximately \$14 M in license fees. The impact of the provision will depend on action taken by the Commission.

Reduced Fees for Veterans. This bill reduces fees for military veterans with service-connected disabilities. Fees for resident yearly fishing, hunting, and combination fishing and hunting licenses would all be reduced to \$2.75. The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that there are approximately 43,486 veterans in Indiana who have service-related disabilities. Estimates of the number of veterans who fish and hunt in the following projections were calculated using the percentage of the state population that obtains licenses for these activities. The estimate of Indiana's total population of 5,899,000 was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau as updated July 1, 1998.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reports that approximately 7% of Indiana's population purchase a license to fish. If the same percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities obtain fishing licenses, 3,044 individuals would be eligible for the proposed discount. However, individuals over the age of 65 are exempt from purchasing fishing licenses. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 45% of Indiana's veterans are near, at, or over 65 years of age. Assuming that only the remaining 55% of veterans with service-connected disabilities must pay fishing licence fees, the number of veterans affected would be 1,674 ($3,044 * 55\%$).

Fishing License Fee. This bill reduces the yearly resident fishing license fee for qualifying veterans from \$8.75 to \$2.75. The annual revenue loss from this license category would be equal to the number of veterans affected multiplied by the revenue loss per license, or \$10,044 ($1,674 * \6).

Hunting License Fee. The Division of Fish and Wildlife reports that approximately 77,000 resident yearly hunting-only licenses are sold annually. Given this total, roughly 1% of Indiana's population obtained a yearly hunting-only license. If the same percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities obtain hunting licenses, 434 individuals would be eligible for the reduced fee. This bill reduces the current resident yearly hunting fee for qualified individuals from \$8.75 to \$2.75, or a reduction of \$6. The annual revenue loss would be equal to the number of veterans affected multiplied by the revenue loss per license, or \$2,604 ($434 * \6).

Hunting and Fishing License Fee. The Division of Fish and Wildlife reports that 114,000 yearly resident licenses for both hunting and fishing are sold annually. Roughly 2% of Indiana's population obtained a license for both hunting and fishing. If the same percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities obtain hunting licenses, 869 individuals would be eligible for reduced fees. This bill reduces the current resident yearly hunting fee for qualified individuals from \$13.75 to \$2.75, or a reduction of \$11. The annual revenue loss would be equal to the number of veterans affected multiplied by the revenue loss per license, or \$9,559 ($869 * \11).

The total annual revenue loss from the above three affected categories of licenses is \$22,207 ($\$10,044 + \$2,604 + \$9,559$).

Fishing Licenses for Youth. Adding fishing licenses to the combined youth hunting license will result in a decrease in revenue of approximately \$10,000.

Exemption for Participants in the Police and Firefighter Games. Participants in the police and firefighter games are exempt from certain hunting and fishing license fees. The impact of this provision is indeterminable, but would result in a decrease in revenues collected from license fees that would have been sold to participants.

Revenues collected from fishing and hunting license fees are deposited in the Fish and Wildlife Fund. The operating budgets of the DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Division of Law Enforcement are funded through the Fish and Wildlife Fund. The proposal would decrease the amount of revenue in this fund.

Explanation of Local Expenditures:

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Natural Resources.

Local Agencies Affected:

Information Sources: John Brinkley, State Service Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, (317) 232-3919; Ms. Every, Office of Veterans' Affairs (800) 827-1000; Division of Fish and Wildlife, DNR (317) 232-4080; US Census Bureau.